

1868

Impeachment of Andrew Johnson. When Johnson sabotaged Radical Reconstruction by the way he administered it, Congress tried to remove him from office but fell short of the two-thirds Senate vote for conviction. Popular opinion began to turn against the Radical Republicans, who seemed willing to subvert the Constitution to accomplish what they want.

1869

Congress passed the **Fifteenth Amendment** to force southern states into providing the right to vote to blacks.

1870-71

Several "Ku Klux Klan Acts" passed to enforce 15th Amendment, known as the "**Force Bills**," which allowed the president to use military force to quell insurrections.

1875

Sumner **Civil Rights Act** passed – called for equal rights in public places and conveyances; blacks could not be excluded from jury duty.

1876 - 1877

Many, North and South, were tired of Reconstruction. The winter of 1876-77 was one of sectional strife. The election was marked by fraud, and from Election Day, November 2, until Inauguration Day, no one knew for sure who would be president.

Hayes-Tilden Compromise of 1877 ended the conflict over the Presidential election and marked end of Reconstruction. Hayes became President in exchange for an end to Military Reconstruction (removal of troops from southern states), placement of a Southerner in the Cabinet, and internal improvement dollars for the South.

Reconstruction in North Carolina

Reconstruction in North Carolina began as soon as General Joseph Johnston surrendered his Confederate army to General William T. Sherman in April 1865. While preparing to leave the state after accepting Johnston's surrender, Sherman placed General John Schofield in charge of the state to maintain law and order and provide for the betterment of conditions for freed slaves. Andrew Johnson, who had become president on April 14, 1865 after Lincoln's death, chose to implement a plan to quickly incorporate the southern states back into the Union through a series of peaceful programs aimed at mending the breaks between southern and northern states. Johnson's first act was to pardon former Confederate soldiers with the exception of primary Confederate political and military leaders. He then established a

Provisional government in the state, appointing William W. Holden as governor. Although Holden had been a states' rights activist before the war, he openly criticized the Confederate government, and, for this criticism, it is believed he was rewarded by Republicans with an appointment by Johnson.⁵⁸

Holden's first priority as governor was to call a convention to restructure state government with the assistance of the military authorities so that the state could rejoin the Union as quickly as possible. Voters who were eligible to vote prior to the war and who had received a pardon elected delegates to the convention. The regulations to establish eligibility for voters effectively blocked African Americans from providing

⁵⁸ Richard Zuber, *North Carolina During Reconstruction*, (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1975), 1-3; Hamilton, *Reconstruction*, 107-109.